

## Message Text

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70/13

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 EA-11 ADP-00 INRE-00 CPR-02 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 SS-15 PRS-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 RSR-01 /092 W  
----- 073829

O P 140730 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9375

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY

AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 953

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - T E X T

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CE

SUBJ: DEATH OF FORMER PRIME MINISTER DUDLEY SENANAYAKE

REF: COLOMBO 944 AND 906

1. FORMER PRIME MINISTER DUDLEY SENANAYAKE DIED AT 11:30 PM  
APRIL 13 AFTER SUFFERING SERIES OF HEART ATTACKS OVER PAST WEEK.

2. PLANS FOR FUNERAL NOT RPT NOT YET MADE BUT EMBASSY SOURCE  
CLOSE TO SENANAYAKE FAMILY STATES IT WILL PROBABLY BE IN FIVE  
OR SIX DAYS. THIS IS PROBABLY TRUE AS MONDAY AND TUESDAY ARE  
HOLIDAYS ( PROPHETS BIRTHDAY AND FULL MOON POYA). FUNERAL LIKELY TO  
BE  
HUGE AFFAIR WITH PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE ALMOST CERTAIN  
TO ATTEND.

3. SENANAYAKE HAD BEEN LEADING VIGOROUS COME- BACK CAMPAIGN FOR  
UNITED NATIONAL PARTY ( UNP), OF WHICH HE WAS PRESIDENT. HIS  
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LOSS IS SEVERE BLOW FOR UNP, WHICH COUNTED ON HIS NATIONWIDE APPEAL IN ANY FUTURE GENERAL ELECTION. OBVIOUS SUCCESSOR TO PARTY LEADERSHIP IS J R JAYEWARDENE, SUPERB POLITICAL TACTICIAN AND SOMETIME RIVAL TO DUDLEY, BUT MAN WHOSE COLD ANALYTICAL BRAIN IS NOT PAIRED WITH GREAT CROWD APPEAL. THERE ARE OTHERS, TOO, SUCH AS FORMER HOME MINISTER R PREMADASA ( MP FOR COLOMBO CENTRAL) WHO HAS IN RECENT WEEKS PRESENTED CHALLENGE TO " OLD- GUARD" UNP LEADERSHIP WITH DEMANDS FOR MORE DEMOCRATIC PARTY ORGANIZATION AND NEW AND MORE APPEALING PLATFORM TO OFFER TO VOTERS.

4. ON NATIONAL SCENE, DEATH OF DUDLEY SENANAYAKE REMOVES ONLY ALTERNATIVE POLITICAL FIGURE TO MRS BANDARANAIKE WITH SUFFICIENT NATIONAL POPULARITY TO HOLD COUNTRY TOGETHER EASILY. AT FIRST GLANCE HIS REMOVAL WOULD THEREFORE APPEAR TO STRENGTHEN PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE. HIS DEATH ALSO, HOWEVER, ELIMINATES RISK TO MEMBERS UNITED FRONT COALITION WHO MIGHT WISH TRY TO OUST MRS BANDARANAIKE THAT DUDLEY, AND NOT THEY, MIGHT BE THE VICTOR. FOR TIME BEING, ANY THREAT ON HER PART TO GO TO THE COUNTRY FOR GENERAL ELECTION HAS LOST CONSIDERABLE CREDIBILITY; HENCE THIS TACIT HOLD OVER HER OWN FOLLOWERS IS ALSO WEAKENED.

5. THREE- TIME PRIME MINISTER OF CEYLON AND SON OF NATIONS FOUNDING FATHER, D. S. SEANAYAKE, DUDLEY SENANAYAKE PLAYED IN AND OUT ROLE IN POLITICS. DEVOUT BUDDHIST, AT VARIOUS TIMES HE SEEMED READY TO RETIRE TO MONASTERY FOR MEDITATION BUT ALWAYS RETURNED TO POLITICAL FIELD. WE RECOMMEND MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE FROM WASHINGTON.

6. FOR KARACHI AND LONDON: PLEASE INFORM DR MENARD GERTLER OF DEATH. IN LONDON HE WILL BE AT WESTBURY HOTEL, BOND STREET.  
VAN HOLLEN

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\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* CONFIDENTIAL

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**TAGS:** PINT, CE  
**To:** NEA  
SECSTATE WASHDC INFO CINCPAC  
KARACHI  
KATHMANDU  
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